



Knowledge, evidence  
and learning for  
development

# SDGs and current trends

---

Catherine Grant  
Institute of Development Studies  
9<sup>th</sup> August 2017

## Question

*Please provide an annotated bibliography for each of the below:*

- *Towards 2030 and the challenges of delivering the Global Goals*
- *Implications of trends for the UK's international development work (with a particular focus on development spending globally)*

## Contents

1. Overview
2. *Towards 2030 and the challenges of delivering the Global Goals*
3. *Implications of trends for the UK's international development work*

---

*The K4D helpdesk service provides brief summaries of current research, evidence, and lessons learned. Helpdesk reports are not rigorous or systematic reviews; they are intended to provide an introduction to the most important evidence related to a research question. They draw on a rapid desk-based review of published literature and consultation with subject specialists.*

*Helpdesk reports are commissioned by the UK Department for International Development and other Government departments, but the views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of DFID, the UK Government, K4D or any other contributing organisation. For further information, please contact [helpdesk@k4d.info](mailto:helpdesk@k4d.info).*

# 1. Overview

This report focuses on Agenda 2030 and the challenges of delivering the Global Goals and the implications of trends for the UK's international development work.

**Section 2** focuses on the **Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs/Global Goals) and the challenges of delivering them** (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>). These Global Goals will shape the world's approach to growth and sustainable development until 2030. Building on the progress made by the Millennium Development Goals, this agenda sets out the framework through which the world will work together to combat the most pressing challenges of our time. The goals are:

- Goal 1: No Poverty
- Goal 2: Zero Hunger
- Goal 3: Good Health
- Goal 4: Quality Education
- Goal 5: Gender Equality
- Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
- Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
- Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities
- Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- Goal 13: Climate Action
- Goal 14: Life Below Water
- Goal 15: Life on Land
- Goal 16: Peace and Justice
- Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Section 2 also includes some evidence providing details of the goals and the progress in working towards them. It also details some evidence on accountability of the SDGs and the challenges in delivering them. There are also some basic videos explaining what the SDGs are.

**Section 3** focuses on **implications of trends for the UK's international development work, with a particular focus on development spending globally**. This section includes information on the operating context for international development, 'megatrends' and drivers of change. It also incorporates several government reports on aid spending and trends. Since 2015, the UK has legally committed itself to spending 0.7 per cent of its gross national income on official development assistance (ODA) each year. Following the decision to leave the EU, government reports have emphasised that the UK will be even more engaged internationally. They state that the multilateral system is vital to the UK and global interests and they will continue to be a committed supporter of it. DFID's multilateral partnerships expand the reach of UK development and mobilise tremendous resources and expertise to tackle global challenges.

In addition to this, section 3 also covers global ODA trends and there is a specific section on aid spending in the United States as they are the biggest donor and there have been big changes in their development spending very recently. This section finishes with a section including some quick and easy to read blogs on recent aid spending trends globally.

## 2. Towards 2030 and the challenges of delivering the Global Goals

### UK Government and the Global Goals

**DFID (2017) Agenda 2030 The UK Government's approach to delivering the Global Goals for Sustainable Development - at home and around the world**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/603500/Agenda-2030-Report4.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/603500/Agenda-2030-Report4.pdf)

The 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development (the Goals) will shape the world's approach to growth and sustainable development until 2030 (Agenda 2030). Building on the progress made by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) between 2000 and 2015, this ambitious agenda sets out the framework through which the world will work together to combat the most pressing challenges of our time, including eradicating extreme poverty, ending hunger, protecting our environment and breaking down gender barriers. The Goals were agreed by 193 member states of the United Nations (UN) in September 2015 and apply to every country. This document provides an overview and examples of how the UK Government is contributing to the delivery of each of the Goals, it is a useful tool to gain a general understanding of what the UK Government is doing to deliver the Goals and the challenges they face to do this.

As the examples in the report suggest, the UK Government is proud of its work to achieve the Goals at home and around the world. But it highlights that they cannot be complacent. The prospect that in a few short years we can end extreme global poverty, hunger and many other evils should motivate us all. For its part, the UK Government will continue doing all it can to deliver the Goals in partnership with all those who share their ambition to make the Goals a reality.

**Tritton, B (2017) Leaving the UK behind? A review of the UK government's SDG approach**

Thinkpiece on the government paper

<http://deliver2030.org/?p=8228>

Perhaps the biggest critique of the government policy paper (above) by Tritton is the lack of detail provided. The overview and examples provided for each goal are linked to the indicators and targets for each goal but a member of public with little knowledge of the Global Goals would not know this. There is little information given about the annual timeline of the monitoring and review process up until 2020 (the next UK General Election at the time of writing) and how national monitoring and review processes will be linked to the UN follow up processes.

It is not clear which departments will be addressing which goals, and how local governments will be involved in implementing and reporting of the goals beyond the involvement of devolved administration systems. A brief assessment of how Brexit will affect the UK's approach to the Global Goals could have been provided even if a brief statement acknowledging the potential impact at the national and global levels. All in all, a brave first step towards commitment to global progress but if the gaps in policy paper are not addressed, the UK could be the one being left behind...

## Measuring Progress

### **OECD (2017) Measuring Distance to the SDG Targets: An assessment of where OECD countries stand**

<http://www.oecd.org/std/OECD-Measuring-Distance-to-SDG-Targets.pdf>

This study of the distances from delivering the SDGs of selected OECD countries is designed to help governments as they consider developing national action plans, as well as to contribute to SDG mainstreaming across different OECD Directorates. It leverages the wealth of statistical data collected by OECD members and harmonised through OECD tools and processes. This booklet updates the Pilot Study, published by OECD in July 2016, by offering a wider set of indicators and more complete coverage of the Agenda 2030 targets, as well as a refined methodology for assessing distance to those targets.

This Study uses the latest information on various indicators available in OECD databases to establish countries' distances from individual targets, and presents results for a number of countries. These starting positions are measured in terms of the distance to be travelled by 2030. This requires setting end-values for the targets to be achieved by 2030. The Study uses a flexible approach to target setting, with appropriate consideration being given to values specified either in the Agenda 2030 or in other international commitments, but also using the current range of OECD performance indicators as a rating scale where no such benchmarks have been enunciated.

### **Howard, J.; Lopez-Franco, E. and Wheeler, J. (2017) Using knowledge from the margins to meet the SDGs: the real data revolution, Participate Policy Briefing 3, Brighton: IDS**

<https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13019>

As efforts to meet the SDGs gain momentum there is an increasing need to consider the inclusiveness of the data revolution. In order to 'leave no one behind' in development, knowledge from marginalised people is necessary and must be valued and recognised. Without this knowledge being embedded in data, the complex realities of people living in societies' margins are made invisible, and data may reinforce exclusion and inequalities rather than challenge them. Knowledge generated and amplified through participatory research processes that promote learning and dialogue between citizens and duty-bearers can enhance accountability relationships and help solutions to difficult social issues emerge. This real data revolution can support inclusive strategies for meeting the global goals from the ground-up.

### **López-Franco, E.; Howard, J. and Wheeler, J. (2017) Participatory Accountability for the SDGs: beyond Social Accountability, Participate Policy Briefing 4, Brighton: IDS**

<https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/123456789/13020>

People who are most marginalised need to participate in the monitoring and accountability of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) if the 'leave no-one behind' ambition is to be met. Participatory accountability is necessary for their realities to be understood and for their voices to be heard. This can be achieved through processes that both enable personal empowerment, collective identity building and knowledge of rights, and support interest in and capabilities for political engagement. Knowledge generated by people in the margins must complement statistical data in order to build a deeper understanding of the issues that perpetuate poverty and inequality and how to address them. People's knowledge and collective action for accountability

needs to be joined with efforts by national governments, civil society organisations, the UN and other multilateral institutions.

**Howard, J., and Wheeler, J. (2015) "What community development and citizen participation should contribute to the new global framework for sustainable development." *Community Development Journal* 50.4: 552-570**

<https://academic.oup.com/cdj/article-abstract/50/4/552/349373/What-community-development-and-citizen?redirectedFrom=PDF>

In September 2015, the SDGs replaced the millennium development goals. The ambitions of the SDGs are to transform the current aid architecture and promote environmental, economic and social well-being on a global scale. The process of how this new global framework for sustainable development has been designed is unique in terms of the extent of opportunities for people's participation.

This article considers what lessons the debate on community development can offer the new global development framework. First, they analyse existing attempts to include 'voices' from the local level in the process of formulating the SDGs, drawing on existing literature on critical community development and citizen participation. They find that the inclusion of citizen perspectives in the SDG process was largely tokenistic. Building on this critique, they go on to explore the propositions within the critical community development literature about an approach to implementing the SDGs that could be truly transformative. Finally, they consider the insights from the critical community development literature in relation to the findings of a global network of participatory research that aimed to influence the SDG design and implementation. They explore how citizen's participation in the new global framework could become more significant through deeper and more strategic forms of representation and engagement. In conclusion, they return to examine the prospects and practical requirements for a more bottom-up and transformative approach to implementing the new global framework.

## **Challenges of delivering the Goals**

**Spaiser, V, Ranganathan, S, Swain, R and Sumpter, D (2016) The sustainable development oxymoron: quantifying and modelling the incompatibility of sustainable development goals, *International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology***

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13504509.2016.1235624>

Critical voices such as the International Council for Science (ICSU) have expressed concerns about the potential incompatibility of the SDGs, specifically the incompatibility of socio-economic development and environmental sustainability. In this paper, the authors test, quantify and model the alleged inconsistency of SDGs. Their analyses show which SDGs are consistent and which are conflicting. They measure the extent of inconsistency and conclude that the SDG agenda will fail as a whole if business as usual is continued. They look at the nature of the inconsistencies using dynamical systems models, which reveal that the focus on economic growth and consumption as a means for development underlies the inconsistency. Their models also show that there are factors which can contribute to development (health programmes, government investment) on the one hand and ecological sustainability (renewable energy) on the other, without triggering the conflict between incompatible SDGs.

**OECD (2015) Governance challenges and suggested tools for the implementation of the water-related Sustainable Development Goals**

[http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/waterandsustainabledevelopment2015/pdf/Governance\\_OECD\\_Tool\\_paper\\_final.pdf](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/waterandsustainabledevelopment2015/pdf/Governance_OECD_Tool_paper_final.pdf)

In practice, governments face 7 categories of governance gaps when it comes to managing water. These gaps should not be considered in isolation as they can mutually reinforce each other, and can be more or less acute from one country to another.

1. **Administrative Gap.** Water cuts across administrative boundaries, be it local, provincial or even national.
2. **Policy Gap.** Water-related tasks are fragmented across authorities and levels of government which raises the question of vertical and horizontal coordination for effective implementation of a water SDG. A whole of government approach that goes beyond “silos” is needed not to jeopardise the implementation of the water SDG.
3. **Information Gap.** Information is power. Though progress has been made in terms of hydrological data and water information systems have spread across the globe, much remains to be done in terms of socio-economic and financial data to guide decision-making in the water sector.
4. **Capacity Gap.** Capacity in terms of human resources, expertise and infrastructure remains a major challenge.
5. **Funding gap.** Increasing the number of people with safe access to drinking water and sanitation and meeting more and more stringent environmental regulations will require financial resources. Three ultimate sources of revenues exist in the sector: taxes, tariffs and transfers from international development. The share of these is a political choice, taking into account issues of economic efficiency, social equity, environmental sustainability and affordability constraints.
6. **Objective gap.** The multiplicity of stakeholders in the water sector makes it vulnerable to lobbying, and risks of capture which can freeze decision-making. If a water SDG can certainly be conceived as a universal, aspirational goal, its effective implementation will require managing a number of trade-offs between diverging objectives, interests and priorities.
7. **Accountability gap.** Many countries are going through a crisis of trust in their governments. The Arab spring has been an emblematic example in the last few years. Often, the capacity of governments to deliver quality public services at an affordable cost is an indicator of accountability vis-à-vis citizens. Issues of transparency and integrity are also important in a sector that has a high degree of monopolistic behaviour.

Implementing a water SDG will require an enabling and regulatory environment that allows monitoring and assessing progress in a transparent and inclusive way. Engaging all stakeholders at different levels from information to partnerships or co-decision according to the needs, also stands as a prerequisite for effective buy-in and accountability.

**Van de Pas, R., Hill, P. S., Hammonds, R., Ooms, G., Forman, L., Waris, A., Brolan, C. E., McKee, M., and Sridhar, D. (2017) Global health governance in the sustainable development goals: Is it grounded in the right to health?. *Global Challenges*, 1: 47–60. doi: 10.1002/gch2.1022.**

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/gch2.1022/full>

The paper discusses definitions of global health governance and whether the SDGs are grounded in the right to health. The experience of the MDGs is that, once accepted, the goals and their targets are relatively fixed. Despite their significant contribution to the Global Burden of Disease (Murray et al., 2013), the non-communicable diseases (NCDs) were marginalised for the



15 years of the MDGs. Although NCDs are now included in the SDGs, it is to be seen whether they will receive the prominence and attention deserved. The NCD challenge does not only require funding or new financing mechanism, but also global regulation to address the key vectors of the epidemic, such as the overconsumption of sugars, tobacco, and alcohol. The global governance structures as part of the sustainable development agenda are poorly suited to deal with this multisectoral issue (Sridhar et al., 2013).

The SDGs may provide for the progressive realisation envisaged in the right to health, but experience from the MDGs suggests the SDG indicators currently under development will determine the priorities for implementation, and as with the MDGs, will form the hubs around which governance structures will coalesce. In terms of ensuring support for the minimum core obligations and prioritizing the marginalised and vulnerable, this comes with some risks.

The central question for this paper was: does the SDG agenda overcome that gap? Does the SDG agenda entail new or improved global health governance that satisfies the demands of the Right to Health? The answer is, unfortunately, negative. In each of the four functions of global health governance (according to Frenk and Moon), the SDG health agenda undercuts the Right to Health. Firstly; the stewardship function of global health governance is not addressed in the SDGs. Secondly; the GPGH that are included in the SDGs are insufficient. Beyond domestic legislation, there is no clear allocation of the responsibility to produce those global public goods. Thirdly; the mobilization of global solidarity merely includes the long-existing promise of High-Income Countries to spend 0.7% of their Gross National Income on Official Development Assistance complemented by a shifting focus on trade investments and domestic financing. Lastly; the management of externalities that impact on health is hardly considered in the SDGs. All in all, the SDG agenda does not alter let alone improve global health governance.

Finally, legal scholars have suggested that current representations of the right to health in the SDGs are insufficient and superficial, because they do not explicitly link SDG commitments or right to health discourse to binding treaty obligations for duty-bearing nation states or entitlements by people, whether legal citizens or undocumented. If global health policy is to meaningfully contribute to the realisation of the right to health and to rights based global health governance then future iterations of global health policy must bridge this gap.

### **Jolly, R (2014) Goals for the future – challenges for the UK and the rest of Europe**

<http://unohrlls.org/custom-content/uploads/2014/12/Global-Development-Goals-2014.pdf>

This was written in 2014 but some aspects may still be useful. The post-2015 development agenda needs to be bold and transformational if the world is to succeed in eradicating poverty in all its dimensions and in achieving sustainable development. The next global agenda must therefore not only complete the unfinished business of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but also go further to ensure that no one is left behind. Current proposals envisage a world free of extreme poverty, where no child is out of school, and no one is hungry or malnourished. There is broad agreement that it should be a universal agenda, promoting sustainable development which delivers economic and social progress within nature's boundaries.

## **Clark, H (2017) Keynote Speech on Improved Global Governance to meet our Shared Challenges**

<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/speeches/2017/02/13/helen-clark-keynote-speech-on-improved-global-governance-to-meet-our-shared-challenges-at-the-high-level-session-of-the-5th-world-government-summit.html>

The magnitude of the challenges our world faces needs to lead us to reinvigorate the multilateral institutions which were established to solve our shared problems.

This is happening to a certain extent in the economic and financial arena, and around sustainable development and governance of the global commons. While development agendas have moral, not legal force, it is encouraging to see so many countries volunteering to be early presenters of national progress reports on the Sustainable Development Goals. Those reports come to the purpose-designed High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development convened under the auspices of the UN's Economic and Social Council – this reform has breathed new life into the role and relevance of ECOSOC and is a welcome sign of willingness to change. As well, the speedy coming into force of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change suggests that there is a broad will to see global governance succeed in that area.

The human rights pillar of the UN has also broken new ground since the formation of the Human Rights Council in 2006 and the establishment of its Universal Periodic Review Mechanism. All Member States are expected to present national reports on the status of human rights in their country, and to respond to the recommendations made by the Human Rights Council. I have no doubt that this helps promote broader adherence to human rights. Nonetheless, from shrinking civic space to repression of freedom of speech and all the way through to war crimes and crimes against humanity, there are many assaults on human rights these days. The need to uphold human dignity is an urgent imperative as it ever was.

While effective global governance in the peace and security realm is struggling, among other things from an inability to update key provisions of the UN's Charter drafted in 1945, that should not stop Member States moving ahead with progressive agendas for addressing the root causes of conflict and using all available mechanisms to build and sustain peace. The 2030 Agenda boldly asserts that there can be no sustainable development without peace, and no peace without sustainable development. Success in implementing the 2030 Agenda will have long term benefits for people and planet, peace and security, and for the legitimacy and credibility of the multilateral system.

## **Informative Videos on the SDGs**

### **How We Can Make the World a Better Place by 2030, Michael Green, TED Talks**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o08ykAqLOxk>

### **UN video on the SDGs**

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2016/01/the-sustainable-development-summit-building-the-2030-agenda/>

### **The SDGs- Action Towards 2030, CAFOD**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-xdy1Jr2eg>



**Hans Rosling talking to the US State Department about Development Myths**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/hans\\_rosling\\_at\\_state](https://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_at_state)

### **3. Implications of trends for the UK's international development work**

#### **UK Development Spending**

**Lunn, J (2016) The 2016 Bilateral and Multilateral Development Reviews, House of Commons Library, Number 7828, 8 December 2016**

<http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7828#fullreport>

After several delays, the 2016 Bilateral Development Review (BDR) and Multilateral Development Review (MDR) were published by the UK Government on 1 December 2016, superseding the 2011 Reviews published by the previous Coalition Government. In doing so, the word 'aid' in the title of the 2011 Reviews was deliberately replaced by 'development'. The 2016 Reviews follow on from the publication in November 2015 of a new aid strategy, UK aid: tackling global challenges in the national interest. The 2011 Reviews were an important moment in the articulation of the last Government's aid policy for that Parliament – the moment when overarching principles and approaches were translated into specific country programmes and decisions on whether or not to support particular multilateral organisations over the next five years. While the 2016 MDR performs a broadly comparable role to that performed by its predecessor, the 2016 BDR does not. Most notably, unlike the 2011 Bilateral Review it contains no information about future funding allocations by country through to 2020/21. Nor does it provide information about agreed results by country over the same period. The delays in publication and the absence of this information in the BDR mean that a gap in public knowledge of DFID's planning frameworks has arguably emerged. There have also been no updated versions of DFID's country 'operational plans' published since December 2014. It is not clear from the BDR whether these plans will now be updated and if so, when. This briefing may be updated in future if future developments warrant it.

**DFID (2016) Raising the standard: the Multilateral Development Review 2016**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/573884/Multilateral-Development-Review-Dec2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/573884/Multilateral-Development-Review-Dec2016.pdf)

#### **Key messages**

- Following the decision to leave the EU, the UK will be even more engaged internationally. The multilateral system is vital to the UK and global interests and the Government will continue to be a committed supporter of it.
- DFID's multilateral partnerships expand the reach of UK development and mobilise tremendous resources and expertise to tackle global challenges. The UK's significant relationships with leading multilaterals help ensure Britain stands tall in the world.
- The MDR systematically assessed the performance of 38 multilateral institutions that the UK funds through DFID.

- DFID rigorously assessed results and value for money, risk and assurance, transparency and accountability. They asked whether agencies were still relevant for meeting today's most urgent challenges.
- This Review set higher standards than the previous Multilateral Aid Review in 2011. The UK is raising the bar, requiring more from their partners by following the money, the people and the outcomes.
- Most of the international system is performing well. The UK's multilateral partners ensure that UK development reaches more people, saves more lives and lifts more countries out of poverty.
- Organisations including the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (the Global Fund) and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, are achieving exceptional results. The UK will continue to give these agencies strong support, while pressing for even higher standards.
- By working closely with partners across the multilateral system, they have in recent years seen encouraging improvements in delivery at some agencies, including the Food and Agriculture Organisation and International Organisation for Migration.
- Many other organisations are doing a good job, but could do even better. DFID will work closely with them, and with other countries, to raise their performance. They will link up to 30% of their funding to UN development and humanitarian organisations to improve results.
- A small number of organisations are under-performing, and they are taking immediate action to address this.
- The Review found that the multilateral system as a whole is falling short of its considerable potential because agencies, and the wider UN family, are not working together. The UK will work with partners to ensure there is less competition and duplication between organisations, and more collaboration and coordination instead.
- Across all multilaterals, the UK will push for improved transparency, better value for money and greater accountability. As part of this Review, DFID is setting out more requirements for multilateral agencies, including new openness about management and administration budgets. By opening up the books, they will empower people around the world to hold these powerful institutions to account and introduce a clear incentive for them to deliver value for the world's poorest people.

### **Bond (2015) Fast Forward: The Changing Role of UK based INGOs**

[https://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/reports/Fast\\_Forward\\_0515.pdf](https://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/reports/Fast_Forward_0515.pdf)

In a rapidly changing global context, all who act in the name of international development must regularly ask themselves: Are we doing the right thing? Are we needed? Are we doing the best we can do with the resources we have? Is the way we work enhancing progress to a better, more just world for all? These questions of purpose, value and utility are particularly pertinent in 2015, at a time of major shifts in the international operating environment. The paper that follows is the fruit of a concentrated process initiated in February 2015. Bond convened views from its diverse membership of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and from other development actors in order to share ideas about civil society over the next ten years. Together they asked the question: What will be needed from UK-based INGOs and donors to respond to changing needs in this new world?

With the International Development Act (2015), although the UK's aid budget has been ring-fenced, its aid agency has not. DFID is currently rated “very good” by independent experts on transparency and its peers value its leadership in driving the development agenda making it a best-in-class development aid agency. However, gains of the past are under threat from staff cuts and the need to minimise transaction costs. At the same time, the public, parliament and the independent aid commission are all keen to scrutinise value for money in the UK's development aid budget. This should be seen as a shared challenge for both DFID and UK-based INGOs, and they must work together to address it.

Profound change is required if a new partnership between DFID and UK-based INGOs is to emerge. However, a “burning platform” created by abrupt changes to the funding environment may create other problems for UK-based INGOs and those they serve that could be avoided by a carefully staged approach to evolutionary change. The changes anticipated over the next decade pose considerable challenges for all who seek a fairer world through development.

### **DFID (2016) Statistics on International Development**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/572063/statistics-on-international-development-2016a.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572063/statistics-on-international-development-2016a.pdf)

Statistics on International Development (SID) is an annual publication that provides an overview of official UK spend<sup>1</sup> on international development. The publication is the release of finalised 2015 estimates, updating the previous provisional estimates published in April 2016, found here. The publication covers:

- Total UK spend on international development for the 2015 calendar year;
- Trends for the last five years;
- Key breakdowns by recipient country or organisation, type of assistance and purpose;
- International comparisons of spend on international development.

### **Manji, A. and Mandler, P. (2017) Budget wheeze could be double whammy for aid and research. *Times Higher Education***

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/comment/budget-wheeze-could-be-double-whammy-for-aid-and-research>

Since 2015, the UK has legally committed itself to spending 0.7 per cent of its gross national income on official development assistance (ODA) each year – amounting to more than £12 billion in 2015-16. Until 2015, most of the aid budget was spent directly by DFID on poverty reduction in specified countries, as is required for its international recognition as ODA, with only small amounts of expenditure through other departments on obviously related efforts, such as research supporting disease eradication.

In 2015, however, a new “whole of government” approach to ODA was announced, by which it would be disbursed through a much wider range of agencies. For academic research, the most significant novelty was the creation of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), amounting to more than £1 billion over five years, designed “to support cutting-edge research that addresses the challenges faced by developing countries”. Part of the GCRF is “allocated” to specific research councils and academies as part of their ring-fenced budgets, but part is “unallocated” and appears to be “new money”, for which research councils and academies can angle. Such new money is highly unusual in this age of austerity and helps to explain the bullish response of many funding bodies to the announcement of the fund.

But the “allocated” part of the GCRF is being double-counted as both ODA and as part of the research budget. And even those strongly in favour of both development assistance and academic research, as we are, might still have doubts about combining the two – particularly as quickly and as loosely as the government appears to be doing. It may not be good for development, and it may not be good for research.

**Manji, A. (2016) The International Development (Official Development Assistance Target) Act 2015: legislative spending targets, poverty alleviation and aid scrutiny. *Modern Law Review* 79(4), pp. 655-677**

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1468->

[2230.12204/abstract;jsessionid=88F8664B166616EC9C9C57D2157FD71F.f03t02](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1468-2230.12204/abstract;jsessionid=88F8664B166616EC9C9C57D2157FD71F.f03t02)

With the enactment of the International Development (Official Development Assistance Target) Act 2015, the UK became the first member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to enshrine an aid target in law. It is now under a legal duty to spend 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) on aid every year. This paper has two aims. Firstly, it assesses the implications of enshrining a spending target for development assistance in law. It connects this to recent moves to set targets for specific areas of spending more generally. The UK's decision to adopt a legal spending target for aid is important because other donors are likely to follow its lead. Secondly, this paper argues that commentators have focused their analyses too narrowly on the legal target (section 1) and that it is in fact the mechanisms for scrutinising development assistance contained in section 5 of the new Act that will be important in future. This is because judicial scrutiny of aid spending is a remote possibility as a result of the International Development Act 2002, introduced in response to the Pergau Dam case. The paper provides an analysis of the new legislation in the context of the UK's now detailed legislative framework for international development aid and concludes that this framework is far from satisfactory.

**House of Commons International Development Committee (2015) The Future of UK Development Cooperation: Phase 2: Beyond Aid: Government Response to the Committee's Tenth Report of Session 2014–15**

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmintdev/339/339.pdf>

Government response to the International Development Committee report on the second phase of the inquiry on Future of UK Development Cooperation: Beyond Aid.

**The Guardian (2016) Less aid money, less influence: Brexit's likely hit to the UK's development role**

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/jul/07/brexit-uk-development-role-less-aid-money-less-influence>

Despite the many imponderables transfixing domestic politics, it already seems clear that **Brexit** will have a mainly detrimental effect on Britain's international role, certainly in the short term. The UK is likely to have less aid money and less influence, while the success of the leave campaign could also signal a more inward-looking agenda.

## International Development Trends

### **Bond (2015) Tomorrow's World: How might megatrends in development affect the future roles of UK-based INGOs?**

[https://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/publications/Tomorrows\\_World\\_230215.pdf](https://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/publications/Tomorrows_World_230215.pdf)

This discussion paper provides an overview of the main factors that are likely to inform how the world changes over the next decade to 2025. In it Bond identify seven 'megatrends' and consider their implications for civil society and the operating context within which international development NGOs work. Finally they identify some key roles that UK-based INGOs can play, which are distinctive, needed and relevant in contributing to addressing development goals. This paper provides a starting point for a broad discussion among the Bond membership about the future roles of UK-based INGOs and the way in which their work is supported by the UK government.

#### Megatrends and drivers of change

- Climate change and planetary boundaries
- Demographic shifts
- Urbanisation
- Resource scarcity
- Geopolitical shifts
- Technology and innovation
- Poverty and inequality

#### The operating context for international development

- Disasters, displacement and humanitarian crisis
- Change spaces, agents of change
- Identity, values, trust and integrity
- The future of development assistance
- Beyond aid....

### **Price Waterhouse Coopers (2014) Reimagine your future: megatrends and international development**

<https://www.pwc.co.uk/government-public-sector/assets/reimagine-your-future-megatrends-and-international-development.pdf#>

The megatrends are already re-shaping the international development landscape today, and will continue to do so over the next few decades. So how should donors adapt, and what will success look like in 2025? While there are many possibilities, it's clear that new thinking and new delivery models are needed. 'Business as usual' will not be an option - donors will have to step out of their comfort zone, and the scale of interaction with the private sector and new donors will need to increase. With new donors placing less of an emphasis on conditionality, accountability and transparency, traditional donors will need to decide whether, and how far, they are prepared to compromise. For example, with transparency being such a strong focus for traditional donors (through the International Aid Transparency Initiative, open data and other sources), what will a model of cooperation on transparency between traditional and new donors actually look like? The role of donors could even change in the near future - some may shift more to a venture capital model, funding game-changing innovations for development.

As the scale and emphasis of the private sector increases in international development (driven by the search for new markets and sustainability as a core metric), donors may be better placed to select new ideas with the most potential for overcoming development challenges, rather than simply delivering programmes on the ground. We may see a growing differentiation between 'thinkers' and 'doers' – with some donors seeing innovation as a larger part of their core business than others, and moving more quickly to react. Donors are already starting to rethink their purpose and role in society, but this should be expedited for those who want to continue making an impact. Perhaps donors could take a zero-based approach to their business, not just their budgeting – asking themselves: what would really happen if they didn't exist? Some donors may become less relevant over the next few decades and it may make sense to merge with others with similar objectives. The World Bank is already undergoing a process of reform, as many of its clients graduate from the low- to middle-income categories in the near future, forcing it to rethink how it delivers programmes. Whatever the outcome, donors will need to be agile and have a firm eye on global changes in order to remain successful

**Green, D. (2015) Fit for the Future? Development trends and the role of international NGOs**

[http://www.globaltfokus.dk/images/Kapacitetsudvikling/Arrangementer\\_kap\\_forum/dp-fit-for-future-INGOs-110615-Oxfam-en.pdf](http://www.globaltfokus.dk/images/Kapacitetsudvikling/Arrangementer_kap_forum/dp-fit-for-future-INGOs-110615-Oxfam-en.pdf)

This short paper summarises the main global trends in international development, before exploring two pressing questions: how is our own *understanding* of development changing, and what are the implications of these changes, whether practical or conceptual, for the future role of international non-government organisations?

It highlights the folly of simple, linear interventions and the merits of alternative approaches such as bringing together stakeholders to find joint solutions (convening and brokering), or rapid iteration based on fast feedback and adaptation.

**Bond's development predications for 2017**

<https://www.bond.org.uk/development-predictions-for-2017>

<https://www.bond.org.uk/news/2017/01/2016-development-predictions-how-did-we-do>

Predicting the future is tricky. Bond's panel of future thinkers have courageously penned what they think the key trends, themes and issues will be for international development in 2017. Find out what you should keep an eye on this year below, from how data will impact on organisations through to what the Unconditional Basic Income might mean for the development sector.

**Hailey, J. (2016) Global Trends and Challenges: Strategic Implications for NGOs, Paper Presented at ISTR Conference, Stockholm, July 2016**

[http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.istr.org/resource/resmgr/WP\\_Stockholm/Cass\\_Global\\_Trends.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.istr.org/resource/resmgr/WP_Stockholm/Cass_Global_Trends.pdf)

Interest in the implications of changing global trends have generated a number of recent studies drawing on current data to make "state of the world" projections and identify potential "mega-trends" and "game changing trends". Examples include reports by the National Intelligence Council (2012), the Oxford Martin Commission (2013) and the World Economic Forum (2013) examining potential global trends 2030 and beyond. Such reports highlight such common areas of concern as: the consequences of climate change, the impact of resource insecurity, demographic shifts, issues around social mobility and migration, the implications of growing



economic inequalities, increased social activism and role of civil society, changing geopolitical dynamics, the impact of new technologies and greater interconnectivity through the web. Similar analysis has been published reviewing the specific issues about the future of aid and the new “aid architecture” (Baobob, 2015; BOND, 2016; Heiner, 2014; Hailey, 2016; ICAI, 2016; Kharas & Rogerson, 2012); new development practices (Wild, 2015; IDS, 2013) and the future of different development institutions (BOND, 2015; Edwards, 2014; Gnarig, 2015; ICSC, 2014; Crowley & Ryan, 2013). The conclusion of such analysis is that needs are changing, problems are changing, solutions are changing, funding is changing, thinking is changing. As a consequence the established models are no longer appropriate for the new future. There is also concern at the speed of change or rapid onset of devastating humanitarian crisis – whether it is an earthquake as in Haiti or Nepal, or the unexpected and dramatic consequences of the civil war in Syria. INGO often refer to Dornbusch’s Law that “crises take much longer to come than you think, and happen much faster than you would have thought”

**National Audit Office (2015) Trends in total UK Official Development Assistance and the Department for International Development’s expenditure, Memorandum for the House of Commons International Development Committee**

<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Trends-in-total-UK-Official-Development-Assistance-and-the-Department-for-International-Developments-expenditu.pdf>

The International Development Committee (the Committee) is considering the resource allocation processes used by the Department for International Development (DFID). This memorandum provides an overview of trends in spending on aid. It is in 7 parts. It has been designed to complement a note by the Independent Commission for Aid Impact on DFID’s approach to resource allocation. This memorandum draws on, and updates, recent work for the Committee, in particular their Short Guide to DFID, and the Comptroller and Auditor General’s report on DFID’s management of the Official Development Assistance target. This memorandum uses Official Development Assistance (ODA) data published each year by DFID, most recently in December 2015

**Price Waterhouse Coopers (2016) Emerging donors – opportunities for new partnerships in international development**

<http://www.pwc.co.uk/industries/government-public-sector/international-development/insights/emerging-donors-opportunities-for-new-partnerships-in-international-development.html>

The international development landscape has become an increasingly large, diverse and complex marketplace, with a proliferation of non-governmental organisations, large-scale philanthropic initiatives and the steady rise of the so called ‘emerging donors’ or ‘new development partnerships’. This Soundbite draws attention to the benefits of being an aid partner, the comparative advantage of the new players in the development landscape, and outlines some of the opportunities they bring.

## **ODA Spending Trends**

**OECD aid calculations**

<https://data.oecd.org/oda/net-oda.htm#indicator-chart>

**ODA is defined as government aid designed to promote the economic development and welfare of developing countries. Loans and credits for military purposes are excluded. Aid may be**

provided bilaterally, from donor to recipient, or channelled through a multilateral development agency such as the United Nations or the World Bank. Aid includes grants, "soft" loans (where the grant element is at least 25% of the total) and the provision of technical assistance. The OECD maintains a list of developing countries and territories; only aid to these countries counts as ODA. The list is periodically updated and currently contains over 150 countries or territories with per capita incomes below USD 12 276 in 2010. A long-standing United Nations target is that developed countries should devote 0.7% of their gross national income to ODA. This indicator is measured as a percentage of gross national income and million USD constant prices, using 2014 as the base year.

### **OECD (2017) Development aid rises again in 2016**

<https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-data/ODA-2016-detailed-summary.pdf>

In 2016, net ODA flows from member countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD reached a new peak at USD 142.6 billion. This represented an increase of 8.9% compared to 2015, when adjusting for exchange rates and inflation. Net ODA also rose as a share of gross national income (GNI) to 0.32. Net ODA continues to grow and its volume in real terms has doubled since 2000. Part of the increase in 2016 was due to higher costs for in-donor refugees, however, if these are excluded, ODA still grew by 7.1% in real terms.

Between 2015 and 2016, ODA for in-donor refugee costs rose by 27.5% in real terms, from USD 12.1 billion to USD 15.4 billion and its share of total net ODA increased from 9.2% to 10.8%. In 2016, in-donor refugee costs represented more than 10% of total net ODA flows for eleven DAC countries, and for 4 of these, it was over 20%. In the last two years, many DAC members have faced unprecedented inflows of refugees and migrants. The DAC is examining how to best deliver whole-of-government approaches, so as to preserve aid budgets, as well as improve the consistency, comparability and transparency of ODA reporting of these costs.

Within total net ODA, contributions by DAC countries to multilateral organisations rose by nearly 10% in real terms. The volume of support for bilateral projects, programmes and technical cooperation rose slightly by nearly 3% in 2016, yet its share of total net ODA has fallen from 58% on average during the period from 2010 to 2012 to 49% in 2016. Net debt relief grants were USD 2.5 billion in 2016, up from USD 431 million in 2015, due to exceptional debt relief for Cuba.

Humanitarian aid rose by 8% to USD 14.4 billion. In terms of financial instruments, bilateral grants provided by DAC member countries rose by 9% in real terms from 2015. Excluding aid for in-donor refugees, they rose by 6%. By contrast, loans extended to developing countries fell slightly by 2% in real terms; net loans fell by 4% in real terms. Preliminary data show that bilateral net ODA to the group of least developed countries was USD 24 billion in 2016, and represented a fall of 3.9% in real terms compared to 2015.

The data indicate that bilateral aid to Africa also fell slightly. Net ODA to Africa was USD 27 billion in 2016 of which USD 24 billion was for sub-Saharan Africa, representing falls in real terms of 0.5% for Africa and 0.7% for sub-Saharan Africa.

This report also includes the change in development spending by country. The largest DAC donors by volume were the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan and France. Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom met or exceeded the United Nations' ODA target of 0.7% of GNI and Germany reached this target for the first time in 2016. The Netherlands' ODA/GNI ratio slipped below 0.7% for the third time since 1974.

**OECD (2015), Multilateral Aid 2015: Better Partnerships for a Post-2015 World, OECD Publishing, Paris.**

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264235212-en>

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/multilateral-aid-2015-9789264235212-en.htm>

**This 2015 OECD report on multilateral aid contributes to the broader debate on how to implement the post-2015 development agenda. It argues that multilateral organisations have a fundamental role to play to forge and strengthen inclusive partnerships that will provide the collective, cross-border solutions needed to eradicate absolute poverty and foster a new era of economic progress, environmental sustainability, and peaceful and inclusive societies. But to be fit for purpose, multilateral organisations will need to implement a challenging reform agenda to both address the unfinished business of internal changes and respond to a fast-changing global environment.**

**Multilateral Aid 2015 identifies how bilateral providers can support multilateral organisations in implementing the necessary changes and fostering effective partnerships that (i) make best use of all resources available for development, including earmarked funding, and (ii) leverage knowledge and resources from partners beyond the “traditional donors”.**

The multilateral system has stood the test of time. Over the past fifty years it has proven to be resilient and responsive to changing development dynamics and urgent needs, a major source of development expertise and know-how, and a powerful channel for intermediating and allocating resources. As the international community stands on the brink of the post-2015 era, the future role to be played by multilateral organisations could be even more important. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals’ transformative vision will call for inclusive partnerships that will provide collective, cross-border solutions for eradicating absolute poverty and fostering a new era of economic and social progress, environmental sustainability and peaceful and inclusive societies. The multilateral system at large – global, regional, traditional and new – is uniquely equipped to support this agenda. Multilateral organisations are politically neutral conveners of global partnerships, vehicles for upstream pooling of resources, facilitators for multi-stakeholder cross-border operations, and setters of global standards and norms. Further thinking about how to improve the functional features of the interactive relationship between providers, shareholders and the institutions themselves will be necessary.

This fifth OECD report on multilateral aid aims to inform these global reflections. It comes at a crucial time, contributing to broader discussions on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and suggesting recommendations for more effective multilateral partnerships in the post-2015 era. It provides a comprehensive baseline of data and analysis regarding the volume and nature of resources provided DAC members and providers beyond the DAC to support the activities of leading multilateral organisations. It assesses the state of play regarding the policies, funding mechanisms and interactions of provider countries vis-à-vis these institutions – and implications for their efficiency and effectiveness. It also provides an essential stocktake on how multilateral organisations themselves are gearing up for the post-2015 era.

## **Recent changes in American development policy and spending and the implications for UK development work:**

**Michael Kaczmarek with Graham Scott, US Development Policy: New Priorities Under President Trump, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017, European Parliament Briefing**

The new administration of US President Donald Trump has put forward an 'America First' vision in the field of development policy. In his 2018 budget proposal, President Trump requests the US Congress to scale back and refocus US political commitments and financial contributions in the areas of economic and development assistance, humanitarian aid and global health. Limited US foreign assistance funding will be prioritised on the regions, programmes and international organisations that most directly advance US national security and economic interests. The US reasoning is that other countries, other donors and the private sector will fill the resulting development policy gaps, through paying 'their fair share'. In line with his scepticism of multilateral agreements and international organisations, President Trump announced on 1 June 2017 that the United States will withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord. While the withdrawal will potentially take years, the USA will immediately cease contributions to the Green Climate Fund, which was not just established to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries, but also to help vulnerable societies adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The President's FY2018 budget proposal includes US\$37.6 billion for the US Department of State (State) and US Agency for International Development (USAID) – a 32 % reduction compared to FY2017 appropriations. EPRS US development policy EPRS – European Parliament Liaison Office, Washington DC Page 3 of 8 For humanitarian assistance, the 2018 budget proposal requests US\$5.3 billion, a US\$2.4 billion reduction (-31 %) and for global health US\$6.5 billion, a US\$2.2 billion reduction (-25 %). The request for contributions to international organisations is US\$996 million, a decrease of US\$447 million (-31 %). US contributions for international peacekeeping activities are reduced from US\$2.4 billion to US\$1.2 billion (-50 %).

Under the proposed budget, the USA will focus its support on countries that are of current national security interest, located mainly in the Middle East and in Africa's Sahel region. Bilateral aid programmes for dozens of other developing countries are reduced to nothing or substantially cut. Funds for regional aid programmes and multilateral development banks are likewise eliminated or reduced.

The President's 2018 budget calls to reduce the US contributions to the United Nations (UN) and other international organisations from US\$1.44 billion to US\$996 million. It proposes to end or reduce funding for international programmes and organisations 'whose missions do not substantially advance US foreign policy interests or for which the funding burden is not fairly shared amongst members'. Priority will be given to organisations that most directly support US national security interests and American prosperity. NATO, for instance, would continue to be fully funded.

**Christopher Grollman, Leonardo Arregoces, Melisa Martínez-Álvarez, Catherine Pitt, Anne Mills, Josephine Borghi, (2017) 11 years of tracking aid to reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health: estimates and analysis for 2003–13 from the Countdown to 2015, The Lancet Global Health, Volume 5, Issue 1, Pages e104-e114, ISSN 2214-109X, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(16\)30304-7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(16)30304-7).**

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214109X16303047>

Tracking aid flows helps to hold donors accountable and to compare the allocation of resources in relation to health need. With the use of data reported by donors in 2015, we provided estimates of official development assistance and grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates

Foundation (collectively termed ODA+) to reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health for 2013 and complete trends in reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health support for the period 2003–13.

The increase in reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health funding over the period 2003–13 is encouraging. Further increases in funding will be needed to accelerate maternal mortality reduction while keeping a high level of investment in sexual and reproductive health and in child health.

**Jerome A Singh, Salim S Abdool Karim, (2017) Trump's "global gag rule": implications for human rights and global health, *The Lancet Global Health*, Volume 5, Issue 4, Pages e387-e389, ISSN 2214-109X, [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(17\)30084-0](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(17)30084-0).  
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214109X17300840>**

President Trump, has, through an executive order in his fourth day in office, reinstated a Reagan-era prohibition on the disbursement of federal funding to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and agencies that provide, promote, or make referrals to abortion services, or give information about abortions. Introduced by President Ronald Reagan in August, 1984, at the International Conference on Population, in Mexico City, the "Mexico City Policy" or "global gag rule", as it has become popularly known, was rescinded by President Bill Clinton in 1993, resurrected by President George W Bush in 2002, and rescinded by President Barack Obama in 2009.<sup>7</sup> The enforcement of the policy has affected major international agencies such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which lost over \$244 million in US federal funding during the George W Bush era.

This executive order could have great human rights and ethics implications. South Africa is an example of a country that stands to be adversely affected. The country bears the world's largest burden of HIV and is a major recipient of US federal funding. The country's constitution enshrines the right to reproductive decision-making and the right to health, while its laws on termination of pregnancy places a legal obligation on health-care providers to provide or refer abortion-seekers to relevant facilities, when qualifying criteria are met. Compliance with Trump's order will potentially require clinicians in NGOs and international agencies that operate in South Africa and receive US federal funding to violate their professional codes of ethics,<sup>13</sup> the country's abortion laws, and the country's bill of rights.

**The Guardian (2017) UK fails to contribute as donors unite to bridge US 'global gag' funding shortfall**

**<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/mar/02/uk-donors-unite-us-global-gag-rule-shortfall-trump-she-decides-conference-brussels>**

The British government failed to join other donors in pledging millions of dollars to an international fund aimed at filling the gap left by Donald Trump's reimposition of the "global gag rule".

At a conference in Brussels on Thursday attended by delegates from 50 countries, pledges were made totalling €181m (£155m) to fund family planning and reproductive health services in low-income countries. Organisers hope to counter Trump's ban on US aid to overseas groups that provide abortion or abortion advocacy, one of the US president's first acts in the White House.

**1 minute video explaining the issue:** <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/mar/02/countries-to-join-forces-to-raise-funds--safe-abortions-trump-order-conference-global-gag-rule>

**DW (March 2017) Trump's planned foreign aid, UN cuts would diminish US influence**  
<http://www.dw.com/en/trumps-planned-foreign-aid-un-cuts-would-diminish-us-influence/a-37956234>

President Donald Trump is expected to push for deep cuts in US foreign aid in his initial budget proposal, but that could be a hard sell in Congress. More likely is a new focus - and a down-sized US role in the UN.

**Schneider, J and West, D.M., How the Trump budget harms global health and weakens international stability, TechTank, 27<sup>th</sup> July 2017, Brookings Institution**  
<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/techtank/2017/07/27/how-the-trump-budget-harms-global-health-and-weakens-international-stability/>

The President Donald Trump budget calls for a 24 percent reduction in spending on foreign assistance for global health. These are the U.S. government funds that support efforts abroad to improve disease prevention and treatment. This decrease could spell trouble for the fight against neglected diseases and, if enacted, would pose a serious threat to international stability.

Foreign aid support for global health addresses a wide spectrum of maladies that disproportionately affect the world's poor, usually in developing nations, and receive a dearth of funding for research & development (R&D) for new treatments. Global health expenditures—whether on prevention, education, vaccination or R&D—represent some of the “best deals in philanthropy.” In fact, as Bill and Melinda Gates state in their foundation's 2017 annual letter: “For every dollar spent on childhood immunizations, you get \$44 in economic benefits.”

## **Easy to read current blogs on development spending:**

**Myers, J (2016) Foreign aid: These countries are the most generous, World Economic Forum**  
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/08/foreign-aid-these-countries-are-the-most-generous/>

**Kumar, R (2017) Global Development Trends from Davos, Devex**  
<https://www.devex.com/news/3-major-global-development-trends-from-davos-89523>

**Leach, M (2017) Why and how the next Government should ensure an outward-looking UK, IDS Blog**  
<http://www.ids.ac.uk/opinion/why-and-how-the-next-government-should-ensure-an-outward-looking-uk>

**Chan, S (2016) Research and evidence for DFID: the role for evidence in new aid strategy, IDS Blog**  
<http://www.ids.ac.uk/opinion/research-and-evidence-for-dfid-the-role-for-evidence-in-new-aid-strategy>

**Scoones, I (2015) SDGs: Will they make a difference? Zimbabweblog**  
<https://zimbabweblog.wordpress.com/2015/09/21/sdgs-will-they-make-a-difference/>



## Suggested citation

Grant, C. (2017). *SDGs and current trends*. K4D Helpdesk Report 107. Brighton, UK: Institute of Development Studies.

## About this report

*This report is based on five days of desk-based research. The K4D research helpdesk provides rapid syntheses of a selection of recent relevant literature and international expert thinking in response to specific questions relating to international development. For any enquiries, contact [helpdesk@k4d.info](mailto:helpdesk@k4d.info).*

*K4D services are provided by a consortium of leading organisations working in international development, led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), with Education Development Trust, Itad, University of Leeds Nuffield Centre for International Health and Development, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (LSTM), University of Birmingham International Development Department (IDD) and the University of Manchester Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute (HCRI).*

*This report was prepared for the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) and its partners in support of pro-poor programmes. It is licensed for non-commercial purposes only. K4D cannot be held responsible for errors or any consequences arising from the use of information contained in this report. Any views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of DFID, K4D or any other contributing organisation. © DFID - Crown copyright 2017.*

